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# Radioactive object found near Hunters Point homes despite years of 'clean-up'

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"With a baby on the way, it's really scary," said Lennar Homes resident Seray Ellington about the object that was found, a device known as a deck marker. (KGO-TV)

By Eric Thomas

Friday, September 14, 2018 06:29PM

**SAN FRANCISCO (KGO)** -- There's been a new scare for people living in a housing development on the old Hunters Point Naval Shipyard. The former base was known to be contaminated with toxic and radioactive waste.

Despite a continuing clean-up, residents were just notified that a radioactive item was found near homes.

Theo Ellington and his wife Seray live in the Lennar Homes development at Hunters Point. They were aware when they bought their home that the soil was contaminated. But this is something new.

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They were among the residents and environmental activists who gathered today at the development to complain that federal and local governments aren't living up to their promise clean up the site.

"They're flouting their responsibilities to clean this up properly, to do it safely and to do it legally," said attorney David Anton.

For decades toxic chemicals from ships leached into the soil at the Hunters Point base, along with radioactive paint and contaminants from early nuclear tests. The Navy, EPA, and state and local governments promised a clean-up.

But the Navy has accused Tetra Tech, one of the companies involved in the clean-up, of falsifying test results. Tetra Tech denies it.

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The Ellingtons believe the device was found behind a fence on what's known as parcel A. That's less than 30 yards from their home. Seray Ellington is eight and a half months pregnant.

"We don't know long term effects and, you know, with a baby on the way, it's really scary," she said.

The device is called a deck marker and was used to guide ships to their berth. It contains Radium 226.

Dr. Ahimsa Sumchai, a physician in San Francisco, said Radium 226 can cause "everything from itching skin, ulceration, dermatitis, cancer."

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The Navy admitted the deck marker was found after scanning for radiation on parcel A.

Their statement said "one anomalous reading was identified as a historical deck marker and removed by the Navy."

The San Francisco public health department added: "Today we are confident that the parcel A site is safe and that the object that was found poses no risks to the residents or workers there."

Developer Lennar said "it was not found on their property."

Environmentalists said they will recommend that officials test everyone within one square mile for radioactive contamination.

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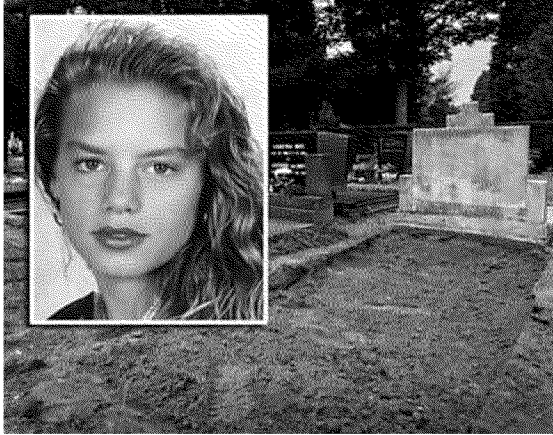
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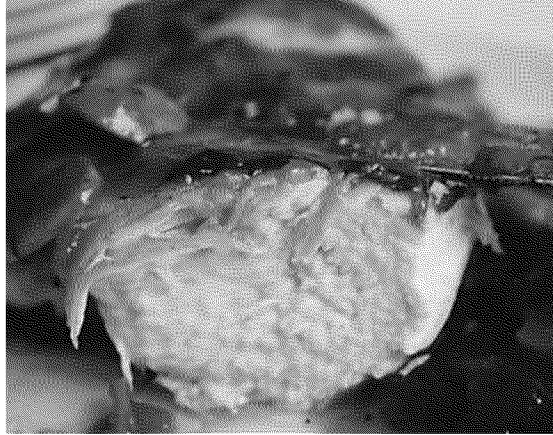
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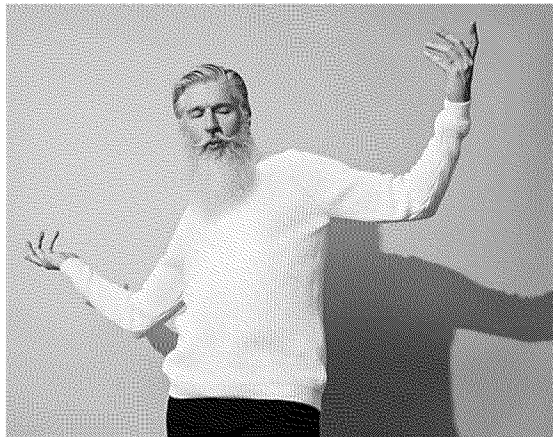
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